Head Qrs 75th Ills Vol
Whiteside Tenn Dec 3d 1863

Ever Dear Lydia

I am proud, and happy to chronicle the events of the last campaign. It is a matter of pride to me, that I have taken my part in it and performed my duties, and it is very gratifying to have our efforts crowned with such Signal Success
As a Regt we have been more than fortunate for we have been in position to witness the whole and not be under heavy fire
We have had beautiful weather, Easy marching, brilliant victories, with small loss, as as Capt Parker Expresses it, "a very large quantity of Extremely good luck"
Monday Morning Nov 23d we moved out of camp here, towards Chattanooga, — We then surmised that we were going into a fight but did not know for certain. About 11 that afternoon we passed Gen Hookers head qrs, and had a sight of the celebrated fighting "Joe" and was favorably impressed with him, he has a nice pink face, and appearances would indicate that he is an Excellent judge of good Brandy — We encamped on his left for the night about two miles from Chattanooga
There had been heavy fighting during the afternoon

on our left in front of the town and reports reached us at dark that it was doubtful who owned the day, but night closes the contest.

On the morning of the 24th we moved to the front at the foot of Look out mountain, and with us was the 84th Ills.- Nearly all the rest of the forces engaged in this conflict were sent to the enemys left flank, and so quietly and swiftly was it done, that before they were aware of it they were out flanked and forced to retire We lay in their front and kept up a brisk skirmish with them.- Chattanooga creek a narrow but deep stream Separating us- We sent a part of our Regt to our right to take possession of a burnt rail road bridge,

I dismounted and sent my horse to the rear, and while carrying orders from one part of the Regt to the other I was obliged to pass by an open space in plain view of the rebel Skirmishers, and several well directed shots were sent after me one striking at my feet others whistling by so close that it seemed as though they must through me. but I was unhurt.- We lay in this position something over an hour having accomplished all we were ordered to do,- to attract their attention and hold them in position,- presently the firing began on the enemys left flank, and so completely by surprise were they taken, that they broke & ran, allowing Hookers to form a line of battle on their flank & extending from the base to the Summit of look out and just at this juncture, the artillery from a line of works in our rear, & extending from right to left Something over a mile, opened on them with

shell.- A hundred shell a minute were hurled screaming through the air, over our heads and exploding among the panic stricken rebels -the effects of every shot was plainly visible to us and I think I never enjoyed any little scene more than I did this.- presently our battle line was in sight, steadily, and in perfect order, marching along the hill side sweeping everything before it,- and our battle flags, and the old Stars & Stripes, how proudly, gracefully they move along, like things of life,- now we watch with intense interest, they near the enemys works, a large fort, but with scarcely a perceptible halt these Northern Vandals, with fixed bayonets, & with a wild yell charge upon them in their strong holds,- One flag falls to the earth, but is quickly raised by other hands, and its folds float proudly in the breeze, firmly planted on the heights of this strong hold= Ah! I tell you, the old Stars & Stripes never in the world looked half so good to me as they did this day- I was happy, was in ecstacy

At this time the line of battle had reached us & our men without orders to cross, the rest of our Brigade had been moved to another field, also our Brigade commander and Col Bennett, & indeed all were getting very anxious to join in the pursuit and he sent me flying over the country to get permission to cross, "he didn't care a damn who it was from, but he wanted orders to go over- Could cross in a minute if he only had orders" Well I soon returned with the coveted permission and away we went at "double quick" but there was

4 Work to be done on the bridge before we could cross and Col Wolfes of the 84th Ills was there one moment before us, with a detail, to put the bridge in a passable condition, but our boys under the inspiration of the moment, brought logs and timbers from the burnt railroad bridge, and soon had it so that we could pass in single file, and we outwinded the other Col and moved our Regt over first. The battle line had by this time got a half a mile by us, although its left did not reach down to the Mountain road, and between that & the creek, there was yet an unreplaced country, and across this we formed, with Skirmishers in the advance we moved on, the Rebs were thick enough, but they had thrown away their arms and stood with uplifted hands, which means, "don't shoot I want to be gobbled" and gobble them we did for in fifteen minutes We sent back over a hundred

Having gone three fourths of a mile without special orders Col Bennett ordered a halt to await instruction - The fighting had now entirely ceased, the Rebs were on a big run, Whether they would ever stop this side of the "last ditch" was a matter of doubt

Presently orders came, in the shape of General Hooker himself, Who rode up to the Col, & asked, "What are you waiting for Colonel?" - and the Col replied "I am waiting for orders General". - You shall have them sir - Send forward one company of Skirmishers and move in column up this Mountain road, and don't stop until you get in sight of Chattanooga

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And then he talked, & joked with the boys in his pleasant cheerful way, and in a very few minutes he had the love and confidence of every man in the Regt. and would have fought for him at the drop of the Hat. It is surprising to see how quick and unanimous, a Regt will evidence their like or dislike for a Commanding General

We moved up the Mountain Side in compliance with the Generals Orders, winding around huge rocks & abrupt cliffs until we reached the extreme height traversed by the road, and here was one place that the road was only eight feet wide cut out of the solid rock, one of this the rebels had blasted and destroyed one half of its width, and right down off this at our left if a man were to fall, he would travel down nearly five hundred feet, before he would come in contact with any thing, and then it would be a big pile of rocks which would probably disarrange his architecture. Some lost no one concluded to make the trip, and we went on until we come in sight of Chattanooga. When we halted and presented a line of battle to the front & reported to Gen Hooker. I found him only a little in our rear, & he rode forward at once, and as he caught sight of the town, he ordered "three cheers", and we obeyed, but rather feebly, and as a kind of apology for the feeble cheer, our old Major, the gallant old Scamp, had to put

on his word.— he always does, when he is arrested,— and he is always arrested,— said he, "General, we dont feel like wasting our breath on that God forsaken place,— we came near starving to death there once, and we want to give it a wide berth in the future" at which the General smiled a broad smile and begged our pardon —said he did not know that or he would not have asked for the cheer

But the thing was growing momentarily interesting Skirmishing had begun on our right, farther up the mountain, which was every moment getting hotter & hotter.— We were now exactly opposite Look out point and down the mountain side, a half mile from the summit, our Regt. was entirely detatched from the rest leaving a breath of thirty or forty rods

The General now ordered us to advance our skirmishers and to move cautiously along to a certain point, overlooking & commanding the road and its approaches & to throw up some temporary breast works, and to "hold this road by God"— We found a few sharp shooters, & Stragglers in our front, but reached the point indicated without difficulty & were soon further protected by some temporary works,— Sharp shooting continued between the skirmishers but no casualties — Meantime there was work being done up the mountain, the enemy was meeting a desperate stand and were contesting every foot of the ground and Gen Carlin, who was laying with his Brigade in reserve at the foot of the mountain opened on them

with his battery of four 12 pound Parrotts, and his range was such that he had to throw them exactly over us, or ought to have done so. but many of them went low, not as high as high as our heads were, and some struck in our midst and exploded, but no one was hurt.— At dark the firing in our immediate front ceased & I relieved our skirmishers with a strong picket detail, and formed me a place, sheltered from the cold wind, built me a little fire lay down in my blanket & was soon sound asleep,— the last thing I heard that night was one continual roar of Musketry, not fifty rods from me, and when I awoke at Midnight, but from a drizzling rain in the early part of the night, and chilled through with the cold, the firing had ceased, and all was quiet, except the shrieks & groans of the Wounded & dying who had not yet been removed from the field

I was told that the fight had been closed for an hours, that the Rebels had inglariously fled leaving left this dead and many of this Wounded on the field— I aroused my Waiter (Colored). replenished the fire, and thawed out my benumbed limbs, had a cup of Coffee made, and indulged in the luxury of a hard tack, and then shiveringly dreamed of home and its loved ones,— Wife, Mother, Sisters, & brothers, all

were with me that night — happy scenes, happy days, long gone, filled past me, and I revelled in this pleasure and for the time forgot (although this groans filled the night air) that these rocks were stained by others husbands, sons & brothers, blood, — Oblivious to ought else I saw less from the carnage hope, & peace, and with outstretched wings hover near, & then with smiles of gladness and shouts of joy, mount heavenward; and then I saw the deep, the holy joy, of the Wife, the Mother, as she welcomes the return from the battle field of her loved one, who has left a true, a Patriots record.

At early dawn I had the command under arms ready for any little tricks they might wish to play but we were not disturbed = and at 7 A.M. in connection with the 8th & 4th Ks made a reconnoisseance for nearly a mile in our front but found nothing but rebel deserters — took in over a hundred of these & returned

Hookers Command had now began the forward march to participate in the coming battle of Missionary Ridge and as our Brigade went past we took our place — We had received our horses during the night and I almost said that I would never loose mine to the rear again. when going into an engagement but mine will not stand fire, and a person presents a less conspicuous mark while on foot